




# MEMPHIS & SHELBY COUNTY EMERGENCY RENT ASSISTANCE ACCESSIBLE COURT DATA

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Neighborhood Preservation, Inc. | SJI Roundtable | March 16, 2022



# COMPONENTS OF SJI PROJECT

## 1. **Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) court data tools**

- Relied upon by five tenant attorneys to represent over 7,000 ERA applicants facing eviction.

## 2. **Evaluation of eviction proceedings in Shelby County**

- Court watch to track representation in court and outcomes across 4,400 cases over four months when the courts reopened.

## 3. **Scaling the court data tools**

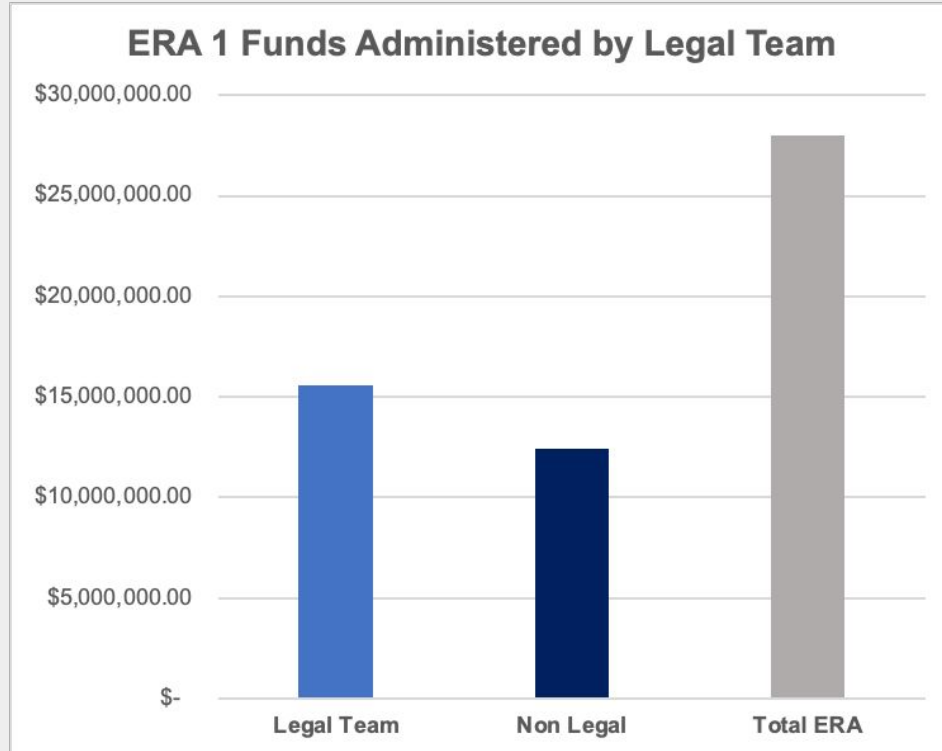
- Scaled to help other legal and social service providers triage and find immediate court information.



# ERA COURT DATA TOOLS

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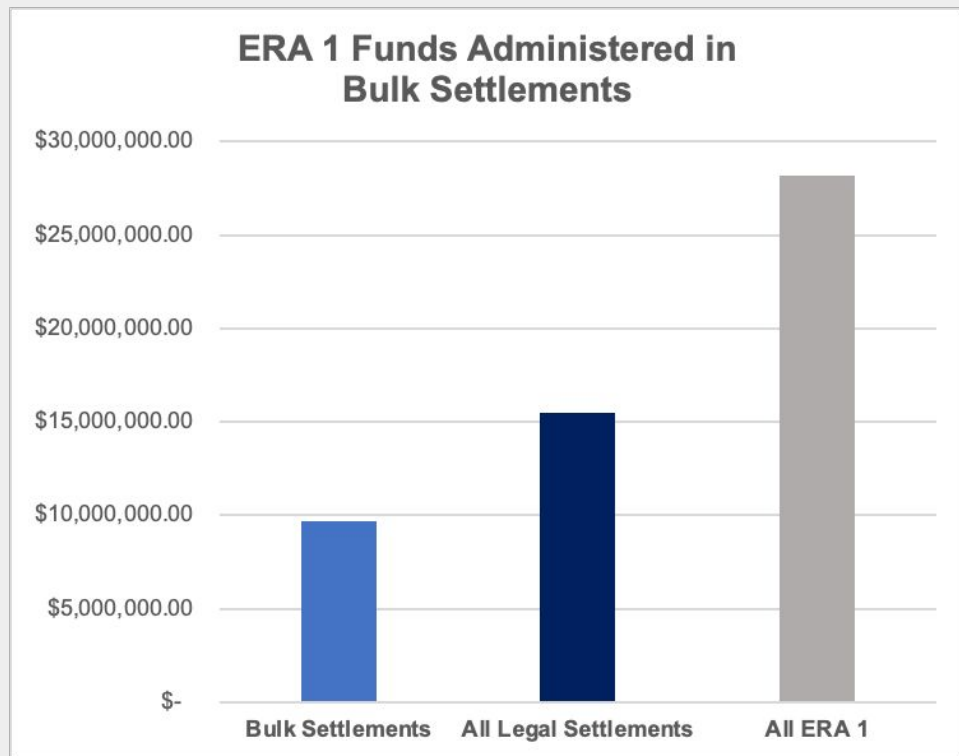
# Background on ERA Relationship



- **Began SJI grant with Cares Act Eviction Settlement program** to understand outcome of providing free legal representation with Cares Act dollars.
- **Jan 2021: NPI became community partner** on Emergency Rental Assistance program.
- **SJI project shifted to understand ERA eviction diversion needs.** Team of 5 full-time ERA attorneys hired to represent ERA applicants and negotiate settlements.

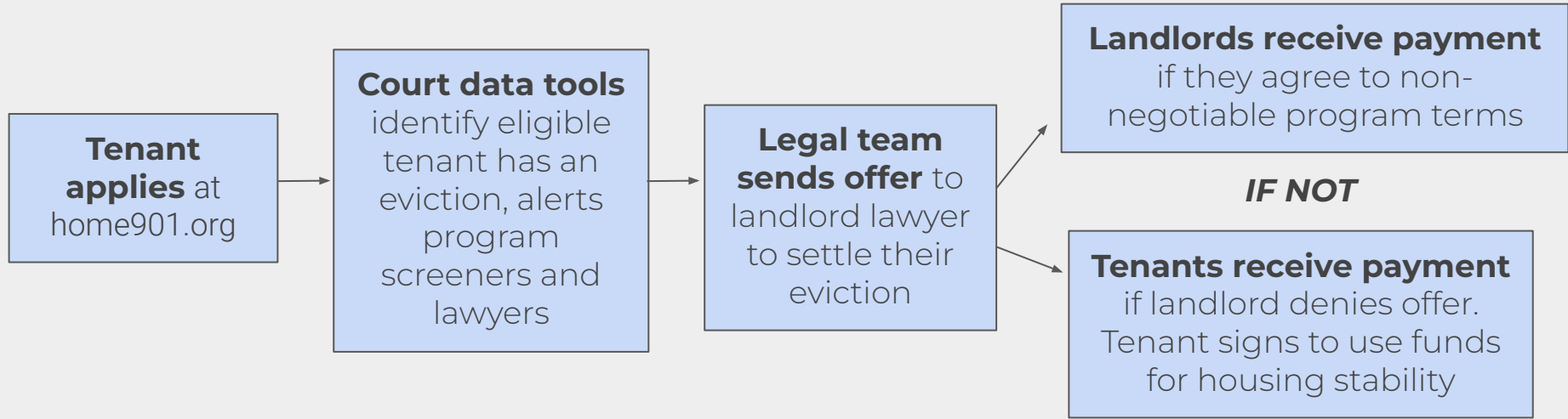


# SJI Court Data Tools

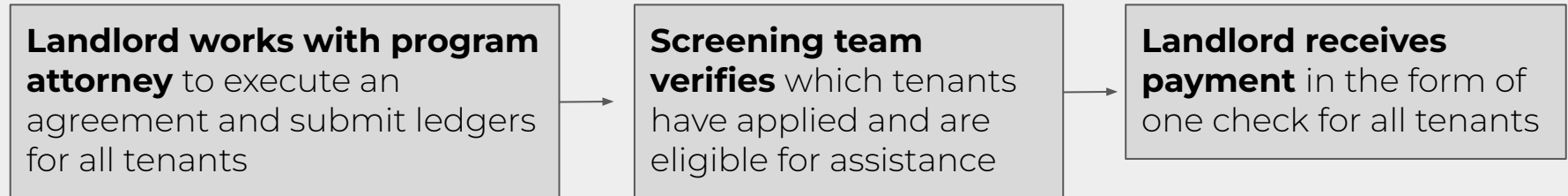


- **We identify who of ~26,000 local ERA applicants has a court hearing** and provide free legal representation.
- **Since March 2021, 6,258 households facing eviction** have received free legal representation.
- **70% of households who receive representation are represented with bulk settlements.** Made possible through ongoing relationships with landlord attorneys.

## ***Individual Tenant Eviction Settlement Process***



## ***Bulk Settlement Process***



# Court Data Accessibility

## Person/Case Type Search

Check for Phonetic Search: ☐  
Check for Partial Last Name: ☐  
\*Last Name or Company Name:   
First Name:   
Middle Name:   
Beginning Case Filing Date:  (DD-MON-YYYY)  
Ending Case Filing Date:   
Case Type:  

\* Denotes required field.

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1. How we use public court data to flag evictions among ERA applicants.

2. How we share this public court data with ERA applicants.

# 1. Public Court Data to Flag Evictions

## Person/Case Type Search

Check for Phonetic Search: ☐  
Check for Partial Last Name: ☐  
\*Last Name or Company Name:   
First Name:   
Middle Name:   
Beginning Case Filing Date:  (DD-MON-YYYY)  
Ending Case Filing Date:   
Case Type:  

\* Denotes required field.

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## 1. How we use public court data to flag evictions among ERA applicants.

- Matched to all ERA applicants to give ERA attorneys case information.
- In the first four months, the court data tools identified 2,000+ ERA applicants with evictions who did *not* self-identify that they had an eviction.



# 1. Public Court Data to Flag Evictions

Court Data Tools--August 2021 ▾							
Table 3		Bulk Nov 2021					
Id and 3 other fields		Grouped by 1 field		Sorted by 2 fields		Color	Share view
Cas...	Assig...	RESOLVED?	Case Status...	Eviction C...	Next Court Date	Case Title	Previous
1374	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2107780	11/17/2022 8:30am	2107780 - REEDY &...	FED SERVED
9974	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2107787	11/17/2022 8:30am		FED SERVED
1907	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2107795	11/17/2022 8:30am		FED SERVED
7380	Kayla		Approved: Sent...	2107924		2107924 - WOLFCH...	VOL. NON SU
3876	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108157	11/10/2022 8:30am	2108157 - GREENB...	FED SERVED
3313	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108160	11/10/2022 8:30am	2108160 - GREENB...	FED SERVED
2917	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108163	11/10/2022 8:30am	2108163 - GREENB...	FED SERVED
3091	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108180	11/10/2022 8:30am		FED SERVED
1405	Kayla	In Progress	Approved: Pen...	2108194	11/17/2022 8:30am	2108194 - THE VIE...	FED SERVED
3859	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108194	11/17/2022 8:30am	2108194 - THE VIE...	FED SERVED
5790	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108383	1/4/2022 8:30am		EVENT DRO
3833	Kayla	In Progress	Paid	2108390	11/18/2022 8:30am	2108390 - RJ PROP...	FED SERVED
2145	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108396		2108396 - PREMIER...	DISMISS W/P
2166	Kayla	In Progress	Approved: Sent...	2108462	12/8/2022 8:30am		FED SERVED
2525	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108464	11/17/2022 8:30am	2108464 - THE RES...	FED SERVED
3119	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108469	12/15/2022 8:30am	2108469 - THE RES...	FED SERVED
1683	Kayla	SETTLED	Paid	2108509	11/10/2022 8:30am		FED SERVED
4931	Kayla	In Progress	Approved: Pen...	2108573	12/1/2022 8:30am	2108573 - ARBORS ...	FED SERVED

## 1. How we use public court data to flag evictions among ERA applicants.

- Matched to list ERA applicants to give ERA attorneys case information.
- Displayed in a low-cost database to show information about courtrooms, plaintiff attorneys, and to triage upcoming cases.
- Made possible through partnership with U.S. Digital Response.

## 2. Sharing the Data with Tenants

### EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE NOW AVAILABLE

Public records show that an eviction case was recently filed against you, and your landlord obtained a judgment from the court for possession and/or money. This means you have ten days from your most recent court date before your landlord is allowed to remove you and your belongings from the property.

### HELP IS AVAILABLE NOW

To Apply for Emergency Rent, Utility and Free Legal Assistance, visit <https://tinyurl.com/901evictionhelp>

#### OTHER RESOURCES:

MIFA – utility & rent assistance and emergency shelter - APPLY at: [mifa.org/applyonline](https://mifa.org/applyonline)

Shelby County CSA – utility & rent assistance - APPLY at: [shelbycountycsa.org](https://shelbycountycsa.org) or call (901) 222-4212



The Emergency Rental Assistance Program is funded by the City of Memphis and Shelby County. The program provides free legal assistance and payments of past-due rent for eligible applicants.

### 2. How we share public court data with tenants.

- Postcards alerting all tenants with FEDs about the ERA.
- Email and text notifications to ERA applicants.

## 2. Sharing the Data with Tenants

	
IN THE GENERAL SESSIONS CIVIL COURT OF SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE	
Plaintiff(s): —	CASE ID:
vs.	
Defendant(s):	
Defendant(s) Address:	
<b>RESET NOTICE DUE TO COVID19</b>	
JOE W. BROWN, CLERK COURT OF GENERAL SESSIONS 140 ADAMS AVENUE ROOM 106 MEMPHIS TENNESSEE 38103	
<b>NOTICE TO LITIGANTS:</b>	
You are hereby notified to appear in the General Sessions Court, Civil Division, 140 Adams, Room 106, Memphis, Tennessee 38103 on 05-JAN-2022 at 10:00:00 AM DIV3.	
I have given the Defendant(s) notice by sending a copy of this letter to the following address:	
4546 SAWMILL DR #3	<b>IMPORTANT:</b> Only people directly impacted by the litigation will be allowed entry (litigants, victims, witnesses). Children who are not involved in the litigation will not be allowed entry.  Individuals with physical challenges/disabilities will be allowed to bring an assistant. It is advised that litigants arrive to the courthouse
Memphis,	
TN 38128	

### 2. How we share public court data with tenants.

- Postcards alerting all tenants with FEDs about the ERA.
- Email and text notifications to ERA applicants.
- Explaining backlog in local courts to tenants.



# **EVALUATION OF EVICTON PROCEEDINGS**

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# Eviction Proceedings Evaluation



- **U of M law students observed and recorded outcomes from 4,400 cases** between March and July to understand current court processes and ERA impact.
- **Research found 32% of all cases were being dismissed or dropped from the docket** and 27% of all cases were being continued. Only 41% of judgments were going to landlords.

# Eviction Proceedings Evaluation

## TENANT AND LANDLORD LEGAL REPRESENTATION



### Landlord Representation

The overwhelming majority of landlords had an attorney. **87.4% of landlords were represented by legal professionals**, while only 9.5% went without an attorney.

### Tenant Representation

**86.3% of tenants had NO legal representation** for their cases. Only 4.4% of tenants had an attorney.

Of the defendants with attorneys, **81% were represented by ERA, ESP, MALS, or NPI attorneys.**



## DURATION OF THE HEARING

In a courtroom with one judge and multiple attorneys, plaintiffs, and defendants, time cannot be and is not wasted.

- 71.5% were less than 1 minute long.
- 14.0% were 1 to 2 minutes long.
- 2.9% were 2 to 5 minutes long.
- 0.5% were 5 to 10 minutes long.
- 0.4% were more than 10 minutes long.

- **65% of tenants did not appear for hearings**
- **87.4% of landlords were represented by legal counsel**
- **13.7% of tenants were represented by legal counsel** (nearly all ERA attorneys)
- **71% of cases less than 1 minute long**  
less than 0.5% of tenants had a case 5 min or longer.





# THANK YOU

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